

At SVP housing hearing Placer officials call for increased communication from the state on the placement process

Today, the Placer County District Attorney's Office and the Placer County Sheriff's Office joined the community in Auburn for the Department of State Hospitals' Sexually Violent Predator Housing meeting.

Both the District Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Office expressed concern with the lack of information from DSH leading into the meeting despite multiple requests from housing committee members. Without adequate information in advance of the meeting, committee members are unable to prepare or provide meaningful feedback during the closed session.

The intent of the new statute regulating this process was to increase participation of local officials. Yet committee members, and the public, remain largely in the dark.

At the meeting, the Placer County Sheriff Wayne Woo and District Attorney Morgan Gire expressed their frustration with the lack of communication and collaboration with the housing committee leading into these meetings. They emphasized the need for appropriate time to evaluate the proposed location by law enforcement and community partners to ensure decisions are being made in the best interest of local residents.

The Placer County District Attorney also asked the state multiple times to share with the community the rate at which individuals who have previously violated the terms of their conditional release reoffend and revictimize; in light of Mr. Stephenson failing his conditional release in 2017.

Despite the District Attorney's and Sheriff's objections, the Department has insisted that any new information about the housing search only be disclosed during a part of the meeting that is closed to the public. This interpretation forbids Housing Committee members from disclosing what happened in the closed session. Any information provided by housing members would be a violation of law and restricts information from the community.

Once the Department of State Hospitals discloses an address indicating where the Sexually Violent Predator will reside, state law requires a minimum of 30 days to disseminate a public notification. Both the District Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Office insist that more time is needed to properly evaluate any location chosen by the Department.

While the District Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Office oppose the release of William Stephenson, they will continue to fulfill their obligations of participating in the Housing Committee process as required by state law.

➤ next hearing will be another status conference on Feb. 5 at 11 a.m. in Department 32. To ensure you are receiving updates leading into this hearing, please sign up for our case portal at www.placer.ca.gov/SVP

➤ state shared that residents can contact them directly at OfficeofCommunications@DSH.ca.gov or call 916-654-2419.

As always thank you for your support during this process.

Sincerely,

Your Placer County DA's Office



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